

# PANORAMA

**Spirit-Filled Life Bible: The Ministry of Divine Healing****Nathaniel M. Van Cleave**

The dynamic ministry of Jesus not only revealed God's heart of love for mankind's need of a Redeemer, but unveiled God's compassionate heart of mercy for mankind's need of a Healer. The will of God was perfectly disclosed in His Son: ours is to seek how to most fully convey that full and perfect revelation. Just as the Fall of man introduced sickness as a part of the curse, the Cross of Christ has opened a door to healing as a part of salvation's provision. Healing encompasses God's power to restore broken hearts, broken homes, broken lives, and broken bodies. Suffering assumes a multiplicity of forms, but Christ's BLOOD not only covers our sin with redemptive love; His stripes release a resource of healing at every dimension of our need. The writer of this study is a missionary, pastor, teacher, and theologian, who has seen and helped multitudes to faith without presumption.

<b>1. The Old Testament Healing Covenant</b> (Exodus 15:26) God's promises to keep His people free of diseases if they obey Him.	<b>2. Healing Repentance and Humility</b> (Numbers 12:1-6) The healing of Miriam points to the importance of repentance and humility in healing.	<b>3. The Focus of Divine Healing</b> (Numbers 21:5-9) Our healing, both spiritual and physical, comes from looking to and identifying with Christ crucified, "by (whose) stripes we are healed."
<b>4. Lessons in Sharing Healing Hope</b> (II Kings 5:1-15) In some cases healing may involve obedience and persistence.	<b>5. Healing by Miracle or Medicine?</b> (II Kings 20:1-11) God is the Author of all healing benefits; medical remedies are an act of obedience.	<b>6. Job's Affliction and Total Recovery</b> (Job 42:10-13) Repentance and forgiving others have a place in receiving healing.
<b>7. A Promise of Divinely Protected Health</b> (Psalm 91:9-10) Protection from sickness and plagues is conditioned upon intimate fellowship with God.	<b>8. Saving and Healing Benefit</b> (Psalm 103:3) The Lord not only forgives iniquity but physically heals as well.	<b>9. Deliverance from Our "Destructions"</b> (Psalm 107:20) Some sickness is a punishment of transgression; repentance can bring healing.
<b>10. Healing Prophesied Through Christ's Atonement</b> (Isaiah 53:4-5) Bodily healing is included in the atoning work of Christ.	<b>11. The Extent of Jesus' Healing Ministry and Commission</b> (Matthew 4:23-25) Jesus healed extensively and made it part of the Christian mission of deliverance.	<b>12. The Biblical Grounds for Divine Healing</b> (Matthew 8:16-17) Jesus has borne all our sicknesses, as well as our sins.
<b>13. The Lord's Willingness to Heal</b> (Mark 1:40-45) Saints are to be certain of the Lord's willingness to heal.	<b>14. The Place of Persistent Faith</b> (Mark 5:24-34) The Bible records many who were certain and persistent and thereby were healed.	<b>15. Cultivation a Climate of Faith for Healing</b> (Mark 9:22-23) Continuance in prayer and praise builds faith that brings deliverance.
<b>16. Which is Easier, Pardon or Healing?</b> (Luke 5:16-26) The linking of healing with forgiveness evidences Jesus' concern for human need at every point.	<b>17. The Healing of Spirit, Soul, and Body</b> (Luke 8:36) God has a concern to restore every part of man - his personality, his health, his relationship with God - and to save him from ultimate death.	<b>18. The Disciples instructed to Heal</b> (Luke 10:8-9) The authority to heal has been given to Jesus' disciples as they are willing to exercise the privileges of being messengers and participants in the kingdom of God.
<b>19. Healing as They Went</b> (Luke 17:12-19) The nature of some healing is "progressive" so that a doctor's confirmation is not faithlessness.	<b>20. Divine Healing Never Outdated</b> (John 8:58) Christ ties all facets of His Person and ministry to His own unchanging timelessness.	<b>21. Healing in Jesus' Incomparable Name</b> (Acts 3:16) Jesus' character and office is the authoritative grounds for extending healing grace.
<b>22. Paul's Healing Ministry in Malta</b> (Acts 28:8-9) God heals by many means; the prayer of faith, natural recuperative powers, medical aid, and miracles.	<b>23. The Gift of Healing</b> (I Corinthians 12:9, 28) The Holy Spirit energizes the gift of healing, and it should be established in the church.	<b>24. The New Testament Divine Healing Covenant</b> (James 5:13-18) Sick persons whom the elders of the church anoint with oil and pray for will be healed.
<b>25. Commissioned in Christ's Servant Spirit</b> (Mark 16:15-18) Understanding the Great Commission		

**Exodus 15:26****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**15:26 The Old Testament Healing Covenant, DIVINE HEALING.** This verse is widely referred to as the OT Divine Healing Covenant. It is called a "covenant," because in it God promises He will keep His people free from diseases, and conditions the promise upon their diligent obedience.

The words used here for "diseases" (Hebrew *makhaleh*) and "heals" (Hebrew *rapha*) are regularly used for physical sickness and bodily healing. This is not only a spiritual concept, but also an intensely physical one. The covenant is made absolutely certain by the fact that God joins His mighty name to the promise, calling Himself *Yahweh-Rapha*, meaning "the LORD who heals." *Yahweh-Rapha* is one of the compound names by which God revealed His attributes to Israel. Here His very name declares it is His nature to be the Healer to those who obey His word—to recover to health and to sustain in health.

While sin and disobedience are not always the direct causes of sickness, man's fall into sin is the original and underlying cause of all disease. Those who seek healing will benefit by looking to Christ Jesus our sin-bearer, along with pursuing renewed consecration. (See James 5:14-16; 1 Cor. 11:29-32.)

(\* / Num. 12:1-16) N.V.

**Numbers 12:1-6****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**12:1-16 Healing Repentance and Humility, DIVINE HEALING.** This passage relates how Moses' sister, Miriam, was healed of leprosy. She received physical healing through the intercession of Moses. However, her healing was delayed seven days because of her sin in defying the God-given leadership of Moses.

Is it possible that delays in receiving answers to our prayer may sometimes be the result of a sinful attitude? Is there instruction in the fact that the progress of the whole camp was delayed until Miriam was restored? Repentance and humility will not earn healing, but they may—as with Miriam—clear the way for God's grace to be revealed more fully (see 1 Cor. 12:20-27).

(Ex. 15:26/Num. 21:5-9) N.V.

**Numbers 21:5-9****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**21:5-9 The Focus of Divine Healing, DIVINE HEALING.** The plague of fiery serpents sent upon God's people was, in reality, a self-inflicted punishment, resulting from their frequent murmuring. God's judgment was in allowing what their own presumption invited, and many died from the bites of the serpents. But in answer to the repentance of His people, God prescribed the erecting of a bronze serpent to which any might look in faith and be healed. Jesus referred to this account in John 3:14, 15. He clearly implied that the bronze serpent typified His being raised upon the Cross. Our healing, both spiritual and physical, comes from looking to and identifying with Christ crucified, "by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24).

(Num. 12:1-16/2 Kin. 5:1-15) N.V.

***II Kings 5:1-15*****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**5:1-15 Lessons in Sharing Healing Hope, DIVINE HEALING.** Naaman the Syrian general was a good man, and apparently his leprosy was not the result of his wrongdoing. Thus, the episode furnishes us with some practical insights into God's healing process when the sick person is innocent of known disobedience or action exposing them to their affliction. 1) See the importance of our sharing the hope of God's healing with others. The door to Naaman's healing was opened by a Jewish maid who recommended he seek out the prophet Elisha. Believers do good when they witness to others of both the saving and healing power of Jesus. 2) See how God knows what to deal with in each person. Naaman was instructed to dip seven times in the Jordan River, and this displeased him. His human brashness and hidden pride were surfaced, and his obedience and submission opened the way to health. A similar call may face any of us, as healing often awaits obedient action. For example, Jesus instructed 10 lepers to show themselves to the priest, and they were healed after taking that first step of obedience (Luke 17:12-14). People who have received prayer for healing sometimes give up when they do not see immediate healing, rather than seek God for a possible faith-building step of submission. (See also 2 Kin. 20:1-11.)

(Num. 21:5-9/2 Kin. 20:1-11) N.V.

***II Kings 20:1-11*****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**20:1-11 Healing by Miracle or Medicine? DIVINE HEALING.** This story of Hezekiah's miraculous healing begins with his being informed by the prophet Isaiah that he will die of his illness. He immediately begins to pray and seek God earnestly, not accepting the fate of death. God's addition of 15 years to his life suggests that prayer in the face of terminal illness is never inappropriate. But Isaiah also directs Hezekiah to apply a poultice of figs to his boil. Some scholars point to the figs as a medical prescription, and attribute the healing power to the poultice. The Bible does not condemn resorting to medical remedies; but, in this case, to think that such a poultice, by itself, could cure a terminal illness seems absurd. God is the Author of all healing benefit, however; and the application of the poultice appears to suggest that human medical aid is never inappropriate either. God alone can heal: He does so by miracle means, by natural means, and by human means. None should be demeaned as unworthy. However, this text clearly shows that Hezekiah's deliverance from death came from God, not man. (See James 5:14-16.)

(2 Kin. 5:1-15/Job 42:10-13) N.V.

**Job 42:10-13****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

42:10–13 Job's Affliction and Total Recovery, DIVINE HEALING. Some point to Job to prove that sickness is God's will for many people. It is true that God permitted Job's illness to show Satan that Job would not turn from his Lord in the face of adversity. However, it is important to see that the affliction was a direct work of the Devil (2:2). Further, illness was only one of Job's adversities. When God later healed him and restored all his losses two times over, the Hebrew text literally refers to his recovery as a return from captivity; an evidence that all his restoration was a driving back of evil: a recovering of something that had been "captured from him" (42:10). This complex case, however, requires the additional acknowledgment that Job's healing appears to coincide with repentance for his attitude. Ch. 29 seems to reveal that Job was extremely self-centered, and he repented later (see 42:5, 6). Job's changed attitude and God's restoring are linked.

Before we philosophize about "God's will" in sicknesses, we would be wise to note how God corrected Job's friends who had argued that his afflictions were a judgment from God (42:7–9). But Job's spirit of forgiveness toward his friends became pivotal for his own well-being and for theirs.

(2 Kin. 20:1–11/Ps. 91:9, 10) N.V.

**Psalms 91:9-10****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

91:9, 10 A Promise of Divinely Protected Health, DIVINE HEALING. This passage promises protection from sickness as a blessing of the redeemed life. The word "plague" (Hebrew *nehgah*) is used of something "inflicted" on a body, and specifically was used to refer to "spots of leprosy." Here the Lord describes an abiding defense against "inflicted" disease, but the promise is conditioned upon making the Lord our true refuge and habitation. How can we do this? Two Hebrew words in v. 9 give us the answer. The word *makhseh*, translated "refuge," means "a shelter," "a place of trust," and derives from the root *khawsaw*, meaning "to flee for protection," "to confide in." *Maween*, translated "dwelling place," indicates "a retreat." It comes from the root *'onah*, which describes the security of intimately "dwelling together as in marriage." These key words elaborate a principle. When we make the Lord our refuge and habitation by trusting Him—taking our cares, fears and needs to Him; by seeking His counsel, spending times of refreshing with Him; and by loving Him and walking closely with Him through every day, we enter into a sheltered place of promise regarding health. This truth safeguards against making prayer for healing only a recourse for emergencies, though some do, in sickness or emergency, find repentance and renewed fellowship with God and discover His mercy.

(Job 42:10–13/Ps. 103:3) N.V.

*Psalm 103:3*



**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**103:3 God's Saving and Healing Benefit, DIVINE HEALING.** This is a definite OT promise of bodily healing based upon the character of Yahweh as the Healer. It is clear that the dimension of healing promised here is specifically to include physical wholeness. The text reinforces the healing covenant, since the Hebrew word *tachawloo* (diseases) is from the same root (*chawlah*) as the word for "disease" in Ex. 15:26 (*makhaleh*). Further, the words for "heal" are the same in both passages (Hebrew *rapha'*), the distinct meaning involving the idea of mending or curing. The two texts form a strong bond (Deut. 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1). These two verses bear witness from the OT that the Lord not only forgives iniquities; He heals our diseases. If under the former covenant bodily healing was pointedly included with the Father's many other benefits, we can rejoice and rest in faith. The New Covenant "glory" exceeds everything of the Old (2 Cor. 3:7-11), and we can be certain that God, in Christ, has made a complete provision for the well-being of our total person.

(Ps. 91:9, 10/Ps. 107:20) N.V.

*Psalm 107:20*



**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**107:20 Deliverance from Our "Destructions," DIVINE HEALING.** In this psalm, sickness is the punishment for transgression. To transgress is to willfully violate known boundaries of obedience. The punishment, then, is not so much a direct action of God's will as an indirect result of our having violated the blessings within the boundaries of His will, and thus having exposed ourselves to the judgments outside it. However, deliverance may come with genuine repentance. Too often people do not call upon God until calamity strikes. Storms come upon us all; sudden difficulty or severe sickness may arrest us from our unperceived or willful spiritual decline. But the text implies that if the Lord is sought with a contrite heart, crying for deliverance, the calamity may be reversed and result in both spiritual and physical healing. The Lord will hear such a cry; and when He does, He heals us with "His word" (v. 20). (A beautiful example of this is seen in Jesus' healing of the centurion's servant in Matt. 8:8.)

(Ps. 103:3/Is. 53:4, 5) N.V.

**Isaiah 53:4-5****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**53:4, 5 Healing Prophesied Through Christ's Atonement, DIVINE HEALING.** Is. 53 clearly teaches that bodily healing is included in the atoning work of Christ, His suffering, and His Cross. The Hebrew words for "griefs" and "sorrows" (v. 4) specifically mean physical affliction. This is verified in the fact that Matt. 8:17 says this Is. text is being exemplarily fulfilled in Jesus' healing people of human sickness and other physical need.

Further, that the words "borne" and "carried" refer to Jesus' atoning work on the Cross is made clear by the fact that they are the same words used to describe Christ's bearing our sins (see v. 11; also 1 Pet. 2:24). These texts unequivocally link the grounds of provision for both our salvation and our healing to the atoning work of Calvary. Neither is automatically appropriated however; for each provision—a soul's eternal salvation or a person's temporal, physical healing—must be received by faith. Christ's work on the Cross makes each possible: simple faith receives each as we choose.

Incidentally, a few contend that Isaiah's prophecy about sickness was fulfilled completely by the one-day healings described by Matt. 8:17. A close look, however, will show that the word "fulfill" often applies to an action that extends throughout the whole church age. (See Is. 42:1-4; Matt. 12:14-17.)

(Ps. 107:20/Matt. 4:23-25) N.V.

**Matthew 4:23-25****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**4:23-25 The Extent of Jesus' Healing Ministry and Commission, DIVINE HEALING.** These verses show the large extent of Jesus' healing ministry. Jesus' ministry consisted of teaching, preaching, making disciples, healing the sick, and casting out demons. This passage is the first NT record of Jesus healing physical afflictions and bringing deliverance to the demonically tormented. Some argue that Jesus healed during His ministry only in order to demonstrate His deity. Look, however, at such passages as 9:36, 37 and 14:14, where it is clear that He healed out of compassion for the suffering multitudes. Therefore, it seems obvious that Jesus intended healing to be a part of the Christian mission of deliverance. His Great Commission includes the promise: "They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:18). He extends this commission on the basis of His atonement, His compassion, and His promise of power to fulfill His word.

(Is. 53:4, 5/Matt. 8:16, 17) N.V.

**Matthew 8:16-17****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**8:16, 17 The Biblical Grounds for Divine Healing, DIVINE HEALING.** The provision of divine healing must rest on clear grounds. Obviously it is biblically based, but from what source is this great mercy of God derived? Some link it to just that—God's mercy. While that is certainly a truth—for His compassion is great—the question at issue is this: What are the redemptive grounds of divine healing? Is healing included in God's saving provision in Christ, or is it simply a loving gesture of His benevolent character? This text, together with our discussion of Is. 53:4, 5, gives clear evidence for divine healing as being provided in the atonement of Christ's redeeming work on the Cross. To avoid this truth, some suggest that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled completely by the healings of that one day. Such would be impossible, for the prophecy of Isaiah states that the Servant of Yahweh would bear sickness in the same way that He would bear sins—that is, vicariously (see Kingdom Dynamics at Is. 53:4, 5). Furthermore, He was to suffer for our sins and sicknesses. If "our" means all of us in regard to our sin and our being given a Savior, then it also means all of us in regard to sickness and our having been given a Divine Healer. (See Mark 1:40-45.)

(Matt. 4:23-25/Mark 1:40-45) N.V.

**Mark 1:40-45****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**1:40-45 The Lord's Willingness to Heal, DIVINE HEALING.** Here Jesus declares His willingness to heal the sick. Some insist that we must always preface our prayer for healing with, "If it is Your will." How can one have positive faith who begins a request with an "if"? We do not pray for salvation with an "if."

The leper was certain that Jesus was able to heal him; he was not sure that it was His will. But Jesus' response settled that question: "I am willing; be cleansed." May we not be certain that it is the Lord's will to do that for which He has made redemptive provision? At the same time, one cannot intentionally be living in violation of God's will and expect His promises will be fulfilled. Where biblical conditions for participating in God's processes are present, they must be met; but let us not avoid either God's readiness or God's remedies by reason of the question of His willingness. "If it is Your will" is more often an expression of fear, a proviso to "excuse God of blame" if our faith or His sovereign purposes do not bring healing. If His will is questioned, leave the issue to His sovereignty and remove it from your prayer. Our faith may be weak or incomplete in some regards. We, in fact, may not be healed at times, which should never be viewed as reason for condemnation (Rom. 8:1). Nevertheless, in all things, let us praise Him for His faithfulness and compassion. This is a great environment for healing to be realized and is consistent with the Scriptures, which reveal Jesus as willing to heal.

(Matt. 8:16, 17/Mark 5:24-34) N.V.

**Mark 5:24-34****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**5:24-34 The Place of Persistent Faith, DIVINE HEALING.** This passage relates the account of a desperate woman whose healing was the result of great and persistent faith. Her illness made her ceremonially unclean and disqualified her for mixing with crowds of people, yet she was certain that "if only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well" (v. 28). Jesus did not rebuke her, but delayed His mission to the home of Jairus, whose daughter was dying, in order to assure her of healing and salvation.

Jesus later raised Jairus's daughter from the dead, but here He took time to minister to one with positive faith. That such persistence is rewarded is not to suggest healing or any other work of God is earned by human effort. It rather illustrates the need to be bold in what we believe—to not be deterred by circumstance or discouraged by others. "All things are possible to him [or her] who believes" (9:23); and they all are by God's grace (Eph. 2:8, 9).

(Mark 1:40-45/Mark 9:22, 23) N.V.

**Mark 9:22-23****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**9:22, 23 Cultivating a Climate of Faith for Healing, DIVINE HEALING.** In this passage Jesus tells us that "believing" is the condition for answered prayer for a healing. The father of the demon-possessed boy answered in tears, "I believe," then added, "Help my unbelief!" Since faith is a gift, we may pray for it as this father did. Note how quickly God's grace answered; but there is another lesson. Where an atmosphere of unbelief makes it difficult to believe, we should seek a different setting. Even Jesus' ability to work miracles was reduced where unbelief prevailed (Matt. 13:58).

Prayer and praise provide an atmosphere of faith in God. In this text Jesus explained yet another obstacle to faith's victory—why their prayers had been fruitless: "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting" (Mark 9:29). His explanation teaches: 1) some (not all) affliction is demonically imposed; and 2) some kinds of demonic bondage do not respond to exorcism, but only to fervent prayer. Continuance in prayer, accompanied by praise and sometimes fasting, provides a climate for faith that brings deliverance.

(Mark 5:24-34/Luke 5:16-26) N.V.

**Luke 5:16-26**

**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**5:16-26 Which Is Easier, Pardon or Healing?, DIVINE HEALING.** While not all affliction is the result of a specific sin, in this case sin was the cause, for the man was healed when Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven you." From Jesus' words it is clear that Jesus could have said either, "Rise up and walk," or "Your sins are forgiven you." In many cases prayer for healing should begin with confession of sin and repentance (James 5:16; 1 John 1:8, 9).

Jesus' linking of healing with forgiveness is also evidence that human wholeness at every point of need is His concern. Obviously, forgiveness of sins is our greater need, but Jesus does not assert that need for divine forgiveness without affirming His partnering concern for human suffering.

Of further note, this episode teaches how healing often comes when a united group prays together in one accord (v. 16; also Matt. 18:19). The paralytic's healing came by means of men who cared, their faith overcoming all obstacles.

(Mark 9:22, 23/Luke 8:36) N.V.

**Luke 8:36**

**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**8:36 The Healing of Spirit, Soul, and Body, DIVINE HEALING.** The Greek word *sozo* ("heal, save, make well or whole") appears in this chapter, offering Luke's unique perspective as a physician. A full range of encounters appears, manifesting Jesus' healing power: 1) The Gadarene, delivered from the demonic powers dominating him, is "healed," freed of evil powers that countermanded his own rational mind and physical actions. 2) The woman with the issue of blood (vv. 43-48) touches the hem of Jesus' garment, and Jesus says, "Your faith has made you well." 3) In v. 50, after being told the little girl is dead, Jesus declares: "Only believe, and she will be made well." 4) In v. 12, as Jesus explains the parable of the Sower, the word "saved" is used of one's restored relationship with God through faith. Luke's precise account offers a complete picture of the Savior's concern to restore every part of man's life: (a) our relationship with God the Father; (b) our broken personalities and bondages; (c) our physical health; and (d) ultimately our rescue from death itself at the Resurrection. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the whole man.

(Luke 5:16-26/Luke 10:8, 9) N.V.

### Luke 10:8-9



#### KINGDOM DYNAMICS

**10:8, 9 The Disciples Instructed to Heal, DIVINE HEALING.** Jesus' instructions to the 70 sent out in the surrounding countryside are direct and clear: "Heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'" The coming of God's kingdom and the ministry of healing are not separated. The same point is made with the 12 disciples in 9:1, 2. The authority to heal has been given to Jesus' disciples as they are willing to exercise the privileges of being messengers and participants in the kingdom of God. This ministry should not be divided from the complete declaration of the coming of the kingdom. The Holy Spirit delights to confirm the presence of the kingdom by glorifying the King's power, verifying Jesus Christ's working through the ministry of healing. This ministry of healing is experienced throughout the whole of the Book of Acts, and in James 5:13-16 is declared as one of the responsibilities of eldership in a local congregation.

(Luke 8:36/Luke 17:12-19) N.V.

### Luke 17:12-19



#### KINGDOM DYNAMICS

**17:12-19 Healing as They Went, DIVINE HEALING.** The nature of some healing as "progressive" is noted in the words "as they went, they were cleansed." The 10 lepers' healing affords several lessons: 1) Not all healing is at the moment of prayer. Instant healings are often expected, whereas this illustrates the healing "in process" over a period of time following prayer. 2) Jesus' directive "Go . . . to the priests" not only indicates His affirmation of the Law (Lev. 13:1-59). Since the priests were the physicians of that culture, it indicates His approval of persons who have received healings seeing their physicians for confirmation of the healings. 3) The lepers' obedience to Jesus' command is important to note. As they went in obedience, they were healed. When healing is not instantaneous, one ought not to doubt, but find a possible path of obedience. 4) Of that group of lepers healed by Jesus, only one returned to express gratitude. When healing comes, express thanks with praise and worship, and do not be as the nine who failed to return with thanksgiving.

(Luke 10:8, 9/John 8:58) N.V.

**John 8:58**

**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**8:58 Divine Healing Never Outdated, DIVINE HEALING.** Jesus' critics challenged His miracle ministry (5:16-18), His paternity (8:41), His integrity (7:12), and His spiritual purity (8:48). Their resistance was not unlike that which often is raised today against the present reality of healing/miracle ministry. A foundational answer to such doubt is found in Jesus' assertion to His critics: "Before Abraham was, I AM." Christ's answer ties all facets of His Person and ministry to His own unchanging timelessness. This is a timeless message for us today as well. Jesus is not the great "I was" of yesteryear, but He is the great "I AM," "the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). Some confine miraculous healings to Bible times, but church history annuls that theory. Nothing in Scripture ever indicates that there will be any diminution in the work of Christ or the NT church during the whole church age. Jesus said that His church would do greater works than He had done, because He was going to the Father (John 14:12). Jesus healed through the power of the Holy Spirit; and the same Holy Spirit is still operating in the church (Acts 2:38, 39).

(Luke 17:12-19/Acts 3:16) N.V.

**Acts 3:16**

**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**3:16 Healing in Jesus' Incomparable Name, DIVINE HEALING.** Immediately after the Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost, it is stated, "many wonders and signs were done through the apostles." Ch. 3 gives the account of the healing of a man who was lame from birth, a fact well known by everyone in Jerusalem. Peter attributed the healing to no unique human powers, but to faith in the name of Jesus (v. 16).

Note how the invoking of the name of "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (v. 6; 4:10) rings from the apostles' lips. The appeals to Jesus' name as the unmistakable Messiah (Christ), who walked as a Man among men (of Nazareth), is an establishing of His Person, His character, and His kingly office as the authoritative grounds for extending healing grace. The use of another person's name to declare legal rights is called "the power of attorney." This is a privileged power that Jesus has delegated to us in confronting the retreating rule that sickness and Satan seek to sustain over mankind.

(John 8:58/Acts 28:8, 9) N.V.

**Acts 28:8-9**

**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**28:8, 9 Paul's Healing Ministry in Malta, DIVINE HEALING.** Here is a reference to divine healings in spite of the fact that Luke, a physician, accompanied Paul. This fact is so troublesome to critics of modern healing that some have come forth with the theory that the healings mentioned in v. 9 were the work of Luke who used medical remedies, although Luke is not mentioned by name. The theory is based on the use of *therapeuo*, the Greek word for "healing" (v. 8), which some insist refers to medical therapy.

In fact, however, this word occurs 34 times in the NT. In 32 instances it clearly refers to divine healing; in the other cases the use is general. Both words (*iaomai* and *therapeuo*) are used in reference to the same healing in Matt. 8:7, 8, indicating the terms are used interchangeably in the Bible.

This observation is certainly not to oppose medical treatment or to say medicine or medical aid is wrong. It is not. However, it does clarify that this text is not grounds for the substitution of medical therapy for prayer. God heals by many means: the prayer of faith, natural recuperative powers, medical aid or medicine, miracles.

(Acts 3:16/1 Cor. 12:9, 28) N.V.

**I Corinthians 12:9, 28**

**KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**12:9, 28 The Gift of Healing, DIVINE HEALING.** In order that the church's mission might not be limited to the abilities of mere human enterprise, the Holy Spirit provides specially designed, distributed, and energized gifts. Among them are "gifts of healings." The clear intent is that the supernatural healing of the sick should be a permanent ministry established in the church alongside and abetting the work of evangelizing the world. This is for today—timeless—for "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29).

(Acts 28:8, 9/James 5:13–18) N.V.

**James 5:13-18****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**5:13-18** The New Testament Divine Healing Covenant, DIVINE HEALING. Just as Ex. 15:26 is called the OT Divine Healing Covenant, James 5:13-18 is viewed as the NT Divine Healing Covenant. The inspired apostle affirms that those sick persons whom the elders of the church anoint with oil and for whom they pray will be healed.

Some critics of healing for today contend that oil was a medicinal remedy with which the sick were to be massaged, but it is clear the oil is intended as a symbol of the work of the Holy Spirit, who is present to glorify Jesus in healing works (John 16:14, 15). The text plainly states that "the Lord [not the oil] will raise him up" (v. 15). This practice was probably intended to be a sacrament, even as baptism and the Lord's Supper are continually observed today. (This should not be confused with "last rites," which some Christians observe when no recovery is possible.)

Here is an abiding healing covenant to be held as such and practiced today. 1) The sick are to exercise faith in calling for the "elders," that is, for pastoral leadership (v. 14). 2) Confession of sin and heart preparation are important, since our physical well-being is never separated from or made primary above our spiritual health (vv. 15, 16). 3) Healing may come as a result of corporate, group, or personal prayer. 4) The anointing with oil is not a superstitious exercise, but a prophetic action—declaring the present dependence upon the Anointed One—Christ Jesus, whose power is ministered by the present work of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

(1 Cor. 12:9, 28/Ex. 15:26\*) N.V.

**Mark 16:15-18****KINGDOM DYNAMICS**

**16:15-18** Commissioned in Christ's Servant Spirit, WORLD EVANGELISM. To understand the Great Commission in Mark, we must capture the spirit of Mark's focus on Jesus as the Servant. Messianic prophecies, such as Is. 42:1-21, 49:1-7, 50:4-11, and 53:12, forecast Jesus' servant-character would do a specific work and act with unqualified and unsullied obedience.

Mark shows Christ's servant-character by omitting His genealogy (by which other Gospels establish His identity), showing that, as servants of Christ, we, too, might learn the servant-spirit essential to fulfilling the Great Commission. Christ seeks those who will serve without seeking recognition, selflessly and obediently seeking to exalt Christ and make Him known. Such servants establish their personhood and ministries by their devotion and obedience to Jesus, their disposition to serve unselfishly—their only exercise of power being to extend the love of God—ministering His life to the lost, the sick, and those in bondage. They do so wherever and however God sovereignly directs, whether it be through their giving, their going, or their prayerful intercession. The Servant Jesus' love and obedience compel His servants to loyal and unreserved service.

(Matt. 28:18-20/Luke 24:45-48) G.C.

**GOING DEEPER**

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DiscipleshipNotes:

***The Seed Is the Word***  
***Cultivation of the Inner Life by Andrew Murray***

I think that in all nature there is no other illustration of the Word of God as true and full of meaning as that of the seed. To have full spiritual insight into it is a wonderful means of grace.

The points of resemblance are obvious. There is the apparent insignificance of the seed - a little thing as compared with the tree that springs from it. There is the life, enclosed and dormant within a husk. There is the need of suitable soil, without which growth is impossible. There is the slow growth, calling for the long patience of the husbandman. And there is the fruit, in which the seed reproduces and multiplies itself. In all these respects, the seed teaches us precious lessons about our use of God's Word.

First there is the lesson of FAITH. Faith does not look at appearances. By human judgment it looks most improbable that a Word of God should give life in the soul, should work in us the very grace of which it speaks, should transform our whole character, should fill us with strength. And yet it does. Once we have learned to believe that the Word can effect the very truth which it expresses, we have found one of the chief secrets of the Bible study. We can then receive each word as the pledge and the power of God's working in us.

Then there is the lesson of LABOR. The seed needs to be gathered, kept, and put into prepared soil. So also the mind has to gather from Scripture, understand and pass on to the heart - the only soil in which this heavenly seed can grow - the words which meet our need. We cannot give the life or the growth, nor do we need to - it is there. But what we can do is hide the word in our heart, waiting for the sunshine that comes from above.

The seed also teaches the lesson of PATIENCE. The Word's effect on the heart is, in most cases, not immediate. It needs time to develop roots and grow up - Christ's words must abide in us. We must not only increase our store of Bible knowledge daily - gather the grain in a barn - but watch over those commands or promises that we have claimed, and allow them room in our heart to spread both root and branches. We need to know what seed we have put in, and to cultivate a watchful but patient expectancy. In due time we shall reap if we faint not.

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Last comes the lesson of FRUITFULNESS. However insignificant that little seed of a Word of God appears, however feeble its life may seem, however deep its meaning may be hidden, and however slow its growth may be, be sure *the fruit will come*. The very truth, life, and power of God, of which the Word contained the thought, will grow and ripen within you. Just as a seed produces fruit, containing the same seed for new reproduction, so the Word will not only bring you the fruit it promised, but that fruit will become seed which you carry to others to give life and blessing.

Not only the Word, but "the kingdom of heaven is like a seed." And all the grace of it comes as a seed hidden in the heart of the regenerate. Christ is a seed. The Holy Spirit is a seed. The love of God shed abroad in the heart is a seed. The "exceeding greatness of this power" that works in us is a seed. The life is hidden there in the heart, but not instantly or incessantly felt in its power. The divine glory is there, but often without form or comeliness, to be known only by faith, to be counted and acted on even when not felt, to be waited for in its springing forth and its growth.

When this central truth is firmly held as the law of all the heavenly life on earth, the study of God's Word becomes an act of faith, surrender, and dependence upon the living God. I believe humbly in the divine seed that is in the Word. I believe in the power of God's Spirit to make the Word true in my experience. I yield my heart hungrily and wholly to receive this divine seed. And I wait on God in absolute dependence and confidence to give the increase with power beyond what I can ask or think.

DiscipleshipNotes:

**The Power of God's Word**  
**Cultivation of the Inner Life by Andrew Murray**

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*

*The word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe. (See also Ephesians 2:19.)*

The value of a man's words depends upon my knowledge of him. What a difference between the words of men who promise, "I will give you half of all I have," if one is a poor man, and the other is a millionaire. Therefore, one of the first requisites to fruitful Bible study is the knowledge of God, the Omnipotent One, and of the power of His Word.

The power of God's word is infinite. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made . . . For He spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:6, 9). God's omnipotence works in His Word; it has creative power and calls into existence the very thing of which it speaks.

The Word of the living God is a living Word and gives life. It cannot only call into existence, but even make alive that which is dead; its power can raise dead bodies and give eternal life to dead souls. All spiritual life comes through it, for we are born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God that lives and abides forever.

Here is one of the deepest secrets of receiving the blessings of God's word: faith in its creative and quickening energy - *faith that the word will work in me the very thing which it commands or promises*. It "effectually worketh in you that believe." Nothing can resist its power when received into the heart through the Holy Spirit. "The voice of the Lord is in power." Everything depends upon learning the art of receiving this Word into the heart. First, you must exercise faith in its living, omnipotent, creative power.

By His Word God "calledth those things which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17). As this is true of all God's mighty deeds from creation to the resurrection of the dead, it is true also of every word in His holy book. Two things keep us from believing this as we should. The first is the terrible experience in the world around, and perhaps in ourselves, too, of the Word being made ineffectual by human wisdom, unbelief, or worldliness. The other is neglect of the teaching of Scripture that the word is a seed. Seeds are small, they may be long dormant, they have to be hidden, and once they sprout they grow slowly. Because the effect of God's Word is also hidden and unobserved, slow and apparently feeble,

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we do not believe in its omnipotence. Make this one of your first lessons: *The Word I study is the power of God unto salvation; it will work in me all I need, all the Father says.*

What a prospect such faith would open up for our spiritual life! We would find all the treasures and blessings of God's grace within our reach. The Word has power to enlighten our darkness; in our hearts it will bring the light of God, the sense of His love, and the knowledge of His will. The Word can fill us with strength and courage to conquer every enemy, and to do whatever God asks us to do. The Word can cleanse, sanctify, develop faith and obedience, and become in us the seed of every character-trait of our Lord, Through the Word, the Spirit can lead us into all truth - make all that is in the Word true in us - and thus prepare our heart to be the habitation of the Father and the Son.

What a change would occur in your attitude toward God's Word and the morning watch if you really believed this simple truth. Begin training for that ministry of the Word, which every believer must exercise, by proving its power in your own experience. Begin to seek this, quietly setting yourself to learn the great faith-lesson, the mighty power of God's Word: The Word of God is true because God himself will make it true in us! You shall have much to learn, much to overcome, and much to surrender to see that power. But this will come true if you will only approach your Bible study determined to believe that God's Word has omnipotent power in your heart to work every blessing which it promises.

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## FOUNDATION FOR FAITH

## Chapter 4

INITIAL EFFECTS OF  
GOD'S WORD

We shall now examine the practical effects which the Bible claims to produce in those who receive it.

In **Hebrews 4:12**, we are told:

*...the word of God is living and powerful...*

(The Greek word translated 'powerful' is the one from which we obtain the English word 'energetic'.) The picture conveyed to us is one of intense, vibrant energy and activity.

Similarly, in **John 6:63**, Jesus Himself says: "*The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*"

Again, in **1 Thessalonians 2:13**, the apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Thessalonica:

*For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*

Thus, we see that God's Word cannot be reduced merely to sounds in the air or marks on a sheet of paper. On the contrary, God's Word is Life; it is Spirit; it is alive; it is active; it is energetic; it works effectively in those who believe it.

## Response Determines Effect

However, the Bible also makes it plain that the manner and the degree in which it works in any given instance is decided by the response of those who hear it. For this reason, James says in his epistle, **James 1:21**:

*Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflowing wickedness (naughtiness), and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

Before the Word of God can be received into the soul with saving effect, there are certain things which must be laid aside. The two things which James here specifies are 'filthiness' and 'wickedness' or 'naughtiness.' 'Filthiness' denotes a perverse delight in that which is licentious and impure. This attitude closes the mind and heart against the saving influence of God's Word.

On the other hand, the word 'naughtiness' particularly suggests the bad behaviour of a child. One occasion especially on which we call a child 'naughty' is when it

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refuses to accept instruction or correction from its senior, but argues and answers back. This attitude is often found in the unregenerate soul towards God.

It is referred to by the apostle Paul in **Romans 9:20**, where he says:

*But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God?...*

It is referred to also in **Job 40:2**, where the Lord says to Job:

*"Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it."*

This attitude, like that of 'filthiness,' closes the heart and mind to the beneficial effects of God's Word.

On the other hand, the opposite of 'filthiness' and 'naughtiness' is described by James as 'meekness.' 'Meekness' carries with it the ideas of quietness, humility, sincerity, patience, openness of heart and mind. These characteristics are in turn often associated with what the Bible calls 'the fear of the Lord'; that is, an attitude of reverence and respect towards God. Thus we read in **Psalm 25:8, 9, 12, and 14**, the following description of the man who is able to receive benefit and blessing from the instruction of God through His Word:

*Good and upright is the Lord:  
therefore He teaches sinners in the way.  
The humble He guides in justice,  
And the humble He teaches His way...  
Who is the man that fears the Lord?  
Him shall He teach in the way He chooses...  
The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him,  
And He will show them His covenant.*

We see here that **meekness** and the **fear of the Lord** are the two attitudes which are necessary in those who desire to receive instruction and blessing from God through His Word. These two attitudes are the opposites of those which James describes as 'filthiness' and 'naughtiness.'

Thus, we find that God's Word can produce quite different effects in different people, and that these effects are decided by the reactions of those who hear it. For this reason, we read in **Hebrews 4:12**, not merely that God's Word is 'alive' and 'active,' but also that it 'is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' In other words, God's Word brings out into the open the inward nature and character of those who hear it, and distinguishes sharply between the different types of hearers.

In like manner, Paul describes the dividing and revealing character of the gospel in **1 Corinthians 1:18**:

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

There is no difference in the message preached; the message is the same to all men. The difference lies in the reaction of those who hear. For those who react in one way, the

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message appears to be mere foolishness; for those who react in the opposite way, the message becomes the saving power of God actually experienced in their lives.

This leads us to yet another fact about the Word of God which is stated in that key verse **Hebrews 4:12**. Not only is the Word of God 'alive' and 'active'; not only is it a discernor, or revealer, of the thoughts and intents of the heart; it is also '**sharper than any two-edged sword.**' That is, it divides all those who hear into two classes - those who reject and call it foolishness, and those who receive and find in it the saving power of God.

It was in this sense that Christ said, in **Matthew 10:34-35**:

*"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.*

*"For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.'"*

The sword which Christ came to send upon earth is that which John saw, in **Revelation 1:16**, proceeding out of Christ's mouth - the sharp two-edged sword of God's Word. This sword, as it goes forth through the earth, divides even between members of the same household, severing the closest of earthly bonds, its effect determined by the response of each individual.

### Faith

Turning now to those who receive God's Word with meekness and sincerity, with openness of heart and mind, let us examine in order the various effects which it produces.

The first of these effects is: **faith**. This is stated in **Romans 10:17**:

*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

There are three successive stages in the spiritual process here described. First, God's Word; second, hearing; third, faith. God's Word does not immediately produce faith, but only 'hearing.' Hearing may be described as an attitude of aroused interest and attention, a sincere desire to receive and to understand the message presented. Then out of 'hearing' there develops faith.

It is most important to see that the hearing of God's Word initiates a process in the soul, out of which faith develops, and that this process requires a certain minimum period of time. This explains why there is so little faith to be found among so many professing Christians today. The reason is that they never devote enough time to the hearing of God's Word to allow it to produce in them any substantial proportion of faith. If they ever devote any time at all to private devotions and the study of God's Word, the whole thing is conducted in such a hurried and haphazard way that it is all over before faith has had time to develop.

As we study how faith is produced, we also come to

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understand much more clearly how scriptural faith should be defined. In general conversation, we use the word 'faith' very freely. We speak of having faith in a doctor, or faith in a medicine, or faith in a newspaper, or faith in a politician, or a political party. In scriptural terms, however, the word 'faith' must be much more strictly defined. Since faith comes only from hearing God's Word, faith is always directly related to God's Word. Scriptural faith does not consist in believing anything that we ourselves may wish or please or fancy. Scriptural faith may be defined as believing that God means what He has said in His Word - or again, as believing that God will do what He has promised in His Word to do.

For example, we see that David exercised this scriptural kind of faith in **1 Chronicles 17:23**, when he said to the Lord:

*"And now, O Lord, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, let it be established forever, and do as You have said."*

Scriptural faith is expressed in those five short words: *do as You have said*.

Likewise, the virgin Mary exercised the same kind of scriptural faith, when the angel Gabriel brought her a message of promise from God, and she replied, in **Luke 1:38**:

*"Let it be to me according to your word."*

That is the secret of scriptural faith - *according to your word*. Scriptural faith is produced within the soul by the hearing of God's Word, and then is expressed by the active response of claiming the fulfilment of that which God has said.

We have emphasised that faith is the first effect produced in the soul by God's Word, because faith of this kind is basic to any positive transaction between God and any human soul. This is expressed in **Hebrews 11:6**:

*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

We see that faith is the first and indispensable response of the human soul in its approach to God.

*...he who comes to God must believe...*

### The New Birth

After faith, the next great effect produced by God's Word within the soul is that spiritual experience which is called in Scripture 'the new birth,' or 'being born again.' Thus James says in **James 1:18**, concerning God:

*Of His own will He brought us forth with the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

The born-again Christian possesses a new kind of spiritual life brought forth within him by the Word of God received by faith in his soul.

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Similarly, the apostle Peter in **1 Peter 1:23**, describes Christians as being,

*...born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible,  
through the word of God which lives and abides for-  
ever...*

It is a principle, both in nature and in Scripture, that the type of seed determines the type of life which is produced from the seed. A seed of corn produces corn; a seed of barley produces barley; an orange seed produces an orange.

So it is also in the new birth. The seed is the divine, incorruptible, eternal Word of God. The life which this produces, when received by faith into the heart of the believer, is like the seed - divine, incorruptible, eternal.

It is, in fact, the very life of God Himself coming into a human soul through His Word.

For this reason the apostle John writes in **1 John 3:9**:

*Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*

The apostle John here directly relates the victorious life of the overcoming Christian to the nature of the seed which produced that life within him - that is, God's own seed - the incorruptible seed of God's Word. Because the seed is incorruptible, the life which it produces is also incorruptible, that is, absolutely pure and holy.

However, it is necessary to warn that this Scripture does not assert that a born-again Christian can never commit sin. Within every born-again Christian, a completely new nature has come into being. This new nature is called by Paul, in **Ephesians 4:22-24**, 'the new man,' and it is there contrasted with 'the old man'; that is, with the old, corrupt, depraved, fallen nature which dominates every person who has never been born again.

There is a complete and total contrast between these two: the 'new man' is righteous and holy; the 'old man' is depraved and corrupt. The 'new man', being born of God, cannot commit sin; the 'old man', being the product of man's rebellion and fall, cannot help committing sin.

The kind of life which any born-again Christian leads is the outcome of the interplay within him of these two natures, the 'new man' and the 'old man.' So long as the 'old man' is kept in subjection and the 'new man' exercises his proper control, there is unsullied righteousness, victory and peace. But whenever the 'old man' is allowed to reassert himself and regain his control, then the inevitable consequence is failure, defeat, and sin.

We may sum up the contrast in this way: the true Christian, who has been born again of the incorruptible seed of God's Word, has within himself the possibility of leading a life of complete victory over sin. The unregenerate man, who has never been born again, has no alternative but to commit sin. He is inevitably the slave of his own corrupt, fallen nature.

DiscipleshipNotes:**Spiritual Nourishment**

We have said that the new birth through God's Word produces within the soul a completely new nature - a completely new kind of life. This leads us naturally to consider the next main effect which God's Word produces.

In every realm of life, there is one unchanging law: as soon as a new life is born, the first and greatest need of that new life is suitable nourishment to sustain it. For example, when a human baby is born, that baby may be sound and healthy in every respect, but unless it quickly receives the kind of nourishment its nature demands, it will pine away and die.

The same is true in the spiritual realm. When a person is born again, the new spiritual nature produced within that person immediately requires suitable spiritual nourishment, both to maintain life and to promote growth. The spiritual nourishment which God has provided for all His born-again children is found in His own Word. God's Word is so rich and varied that it contains nourishment adapted to every stage of spiritual development.

God's provision for the first stages of spiritual growth is described in the first epistle of Peter. Immediately after Peter has spoken, in chapter 1, about being born again of the incorruptible seed of God's Word, he goes on to say in 1 Peter 2:1-2:

*Therefore, laying aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,...*

We see here that for newborn spiritual babes in Christ, God's appointed nourishment is the pure milk of His own Word, and that this milk is a necessary condition of continued life and growth.

However, there is a warning attached here. In the natural order, no matter how pure and fresh milk may be, it easily becomes contaminated and spoiled if it is brought into contact with anything that is sour and rancid. The same is true spiritually. For newborn Christians to receive proper nourishment from the pure milk of God's Word, their hearts must first be thoroughly cleansed from all that is sour or rancid.

For this reason the apostle Peter warns us that we must *lay aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking* ... These are the sour and rancid elements of the old life which, if they are not purged from our hearts, will frustrate the beneficial effects of God's Word within us and will hinder spiritual health and growth.

However, it is not the will of God that Christians should continue in spiritual infancy too long. As they begin to grow up, God's Word offers them more substantial food. In

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**Matthew 4:4**, we read that when Christ was tempted by Satan to turn stones into bread, He replied:

*"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"*

Christ here indicates that God's Word is the spiritual counterpart of bread in man's natural diet. In other words, it is the main basic item of diet and source of strength.

It is significant that Christ said here with emphasis, *every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*. In other words, Christians who wish to mature spiritually must learn to study the whole Bible, not just a few of the more familiar portions.

It is said of George Mueller that he regularly read his whole Bible through several times each year. This explains in large measure the triumphs of his faith and the fruitfulness of his ministry. Yet there are many professing Christians and church members who scarcely know where to find in their Bibles such books as Ezra and Nehemiah, or some of the minor prophets. Far less have they ever studied for themselves the messages of such books as these.

No wonder that they continue forever in a kind of spiritual infancy. They are, in fact, sad examples of retarded development due to inadequate diet.

Beyond milk and bread, God's Word also provides solid food. This is described in **Hebrews 5:12-14**. The writer of Hebrews here rebukes the Hebrew believers of his day on the ground that they had been familiar for many years with the Scriptures, but had never learned to make any proper study or application of their teaching. Consequently they were still spiritually immature and unable to help others who stood in need of spiritual teaching. This is what the writer says:

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles - or elements - of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*

*For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.*

*But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

What a picture of a great mass of professing Christians and church members today! They have owned a Bible and attended church for many years. Yet how little they know of what the Bible teaches! How weak and immature they are in their own spiritual experience; how little able to counsel a sinner or instruct a new convert! After so many years, still spiritual babes, unable to digest any kind of teaching that goes beyond milk!

However, it is not necessary to remain in this condition. The writer of Hebrews tells us the remedy. It is to *have our senses exercised by reason of use*. The regular, systematic study of the whole of God's Word will develop and mature our spiritual faculties.

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## FOUNDATION FOR FAITH

## Chapter 5

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL  
EFFECTS OF GOD'S WORD**

In the previous study we discovered the following three effects.

First, God's Word produces faith; and faith in turn is directly related to God's Word, because faith consists in believing and acting upon what God has said in His Word.

Second, God's Word, received as incorruptible seed into a believer's heart, produces the **new birth**: a completely new spiritual nature created within the believer, and called in the Scriptures 'the new man.'

Third, God's Word is the divinely appointed **spiritual nourishment** with which the believer must regularly feed the new nature within him, if he is to grow into a healthy, strong, mature Christian.

**Physical Healing**

We shall now see that God's Word is so varied and wonderful in its working that it provides not merely spiritual health and strength for the soul, but also physical health and strength for the body.

Let us turn first to **Psalm 107:17-20**

*Fools, because of their transgression,  
And because of their iniquities, were afflicted.  
Their soul abhorred all manner of food,  
And they drew near to the gates of death.  
Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,  
And He saved them out of their distresses.  
He sent His word and healed them,  
And delivered them from their destructions.*

The Psalmist gives us a picture of men so desperately sick that they have lost all appetite for food, and they are lying right at death's door. In their extremity they cry out to the Lord, and He sends them that which they cry for - healing and deliverance. By what means does He send these? By nothing else but by His own Word. For the Psalmist says:

*He sent his word and healed them,  
And delivered them from their destructions.*

Side by side with this passage in **Psalm 107** we may set the passage in **Isaiah 55:11**, where God says:

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*So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;  
It shall not return to Me void,  
But it shall accomplish what I please,  
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

In Psalm 107:20, we read that God sent His Word to heal and to deliver; and in Isaiah 55:11, God says that His Word will accomplish the thing for which He sent it. Thus God absolutely guarantees to provide healing through His Word.

This truth of physical healing through God's Word is even more fully stated in Proverbs 4:20-22, where God says:

*My son, give attention to my words;  
Incline your ear to my sayings.  
Do not let them depart from your eyes;  
Keep them in the midst of your heart;  
For they are life to those who find them,  
And health to all their flesh.*

What promise of physical healing could be more all-inclusive than that: *...health to all their flesh*. Every part of our entire physical frame is included in this phrase. There is nothing omitted. Furthermore, in the margin of the 1611 King James Version, the alternative reading for 'health' is 'medicine.' The same Hebrew word includes both shades of meaning. Thus God has here committed Himself to providing complete physical healing and health.

Notice the introductory phrase at the beginning of verse 20: *My son*. This indicates that God is here speaking to His own believing children. In Matthew 15:26, we read that a Syro-Phoenician woman came to Christ to plead for the healing of her daughter, and that Christ replied to her request by saying,

*"It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."*

By these words Christ indicated that healing is the **children's bread**; in other words, it is part of God's appointed daily portion for all His children. It is not a luxury for which they have to make special pleas, and which may or may not be granted them. No, it is their 'bread', part of their basic, appointed daily provision from their heavenly Father. This agrees exactly with the passage which we have read in Proverbs 4, where God's promise of perfect healing and health is addressed to every believing child of God. Both in Psalm 107 and in Proverbs 4, the means by which God provides healing is His Word. This is one further example of the vital truth which we stressed earlier in this series, that God Himself is in His Word, and that it is through His Word that He comes into our lives.

As we consider the claim made in Proverbs 4:20-22, that God's Word is medicine for all our flesh, we might quite justifiably call these three verses God's great 'medicine bottle.' They contain a medicine such as was never compounded on earth, one medicine guaranteed to cure all diseases.

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However, we must bear in mind that on the human level, when the doctor prescribes a medicine, he normally ensures that the directions for taking it are written clearly on the bottle, and this implies that no cure can be expected unless the medicine is taken regularly, according to the directions. The same is true with God's 'medicine' here in Proverbs. The directions are 'on the bottle,' and no cure is guaranteed if the directions are not followed.

What are these directions? They are fourfold:

1. 'give attention to my words';
2. 'incline your ear';
3. 'do not let them depart from your eyes';
4. 'keep them in the midst of your heart'.

Let us analyse these directions a little more closely. The first direction is: *give attention to my words*. As we read God's Word, we need to give it close and careful attention. We need to focus our understanding upon it. We need to give it free, unhindered access to our whole inward being. So often we read God's Word with divided attention. Half our mind is occupied with what we read; the other half is occupied with those things which Jesus called 'the cares of this life.' We read some verses, or perhaps even a chapter or two, but at the end we have no clear impression or recollection of that which we have read. Our attention has wandered.

Taken in this way, God's Word will not produce the effects which God intended. When reading the Bible, it is well to do what Jesus recommended when He spoke of prayer; that is, to enter our closet and shut the door. In other words, we must shut ourselves in with God and shut out the things of the world and of time.

The second direction on God's 'medicine bottle' is: *incline your ear*. The inclined ear indicates humility. It is the opposite of being proud and stiff-necked. We must be teachable. We must be willing to let God teach us. In Psalm 78: 41, the Psalmist speaks of Israel's conduct as they wandered through the wilderness from Egypt to Canaan, and he brings this charge against them: *they limited the Holy One of Israel*.

In other words, by their stubbornness and unbelief they set limits to what they would allow God to do for them. Many professing Christians do just the same today. They do not approach the Bible with an open mind or a teachable spirit. They are full of prejudices or preconceptions - very often instilled by the particular sect or denomination with which they are associated - and they are not willing to accept any revelation or teaching from the Scriptures which goes beyond, or contrary to, their own set thoughts. Jesus charged the religious leaders of His day with this fault, when He said, in Matthew 15:6 and 9:

*"Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.*

*"And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."*

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The apostle Paul had been a prisoner of religious prejudices and traditions, but through the revelation of Christ on the Damascus road he had been set free from them. Thereafter we find him saying, in **Romans 3:4**,

*...let God be true but every man a liar.*

If we wish to receive the full benefit of God's Word, we must learn to take the same attitude.

The third direction on God's medicine bottle is: *do not let them depart from your eyes*, where the word 'them' refers to God's words and sayings. We may perhaps bring out the meaning of this third direction by quoting a remark of the late evangelist, Smith Wigglesworth, who once said: 'The trouble with many Christians is that they have a spiritual squint: with one eye they are looking at the promises of the Lord, and with the other eye they are looking in some other direction.'

In order to receive the benefits of physical healing promised in God's Word, it is necessary to keep both eyes fixed unwaveringly on the Lord's promises. One mistake which many Christians make is to look away from God's promises to the case of some other Christian who has failed to receive healing. As they do this, their own faith wavers and they too fail to receive healing; for **James 1:6-8** warns us:

*...he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.*

*For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways*

A helpful verse to remember in such a situation as this is **Deuteronomy 29:29**:

*"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."*

The reason why some Christians fail to receive healing very often remains a secret, known only to God, and not revealed to man. We do not need to be concerned with such secrets as this. Rather, we need to concern ourselves with those things which are revealed: the clear and definite statements and promises of God given to us in His Word.

The things thus revealed in God's Word belong to us and to our children for ever; they are our heritage, as believers; they are our inalienable right. And they belong to us 'that we may do them'; that is, that we may act upon them in faith. When we do act upon them in this way, we prove them true in our experience. In speaking about the various avenues by which a teacher can reach a child's understanding, modern educational psychology has coined the two phrases 'the ear gate' and 'the eye gate'. In considering the directions on God's medicine bottle, we find that in this, as in many other respects, God anticipated the conclusions of the psychologist by many centuries.

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The first direction spoke of 'attending'; the second spoke of the 'inclined ear'; the third spoke of the 'focused eyes.' God's spiritual medicine is to be received therefore, with careful attention, both through 'the ear gate' and also through 'the eye gate.' The inward centre of the human personality, at which the two avenues of the ear gate and the eye gate converge, is called in Scripture 'the heart.'

Thus we find that the fourth direction on God's medicine bottle concerns the heart, for it says: *keep them in the midst of your heart*. Further emphasis on the decisive influence of the heart in human experience follows immediately in **Proverbs 4:23**:

*Keep your heart with all diligence,  
For out of it spring the issues of life.*

In other words, what is in our heart controls the whole course of our life and all that we experience.

If we receive God's words with careful attention - if we admit them regularly through both the ear gate and the eye gate - so that they occupy and control our heart, then we find them to be exactly what God has promised: both life to our soul, and health to all our flesh.

In case this account of what God's medicine will do should seem to be mere fanciful theory, I will add here a brief word of personal testimony. Every one of these lessons connected with the healing effect of God's Word I myself have both learned and proved in personal experience.

During World War II, while working with the medical services in North Africa, I became sick with a condition of the skin and nerves for which medical science, in that climate and those conditions, could provide no cure. I spent more than one year on end in hospital, receiving every kind of treatment available. For more than four months at a stretch I was totally confined to bed. Eventually, after more than a year, I was discharged from the hospital at my own request, uncured.

I decided to ask no further medication or treatment of any kind, but to put the promises of God, in **Proverbs 4:20-22**, to the test in my own case. Three times a day I went apart by myself, shut myself in with God and his Word, prayed, and asked God to make his Word to me what He had promised it should be - medicine to all my flesh.

The climate, the diet, and all other external circumstances were as unfavourable as they could be. Indeed, many healthy men all around me were falling sick. Nevertheless, through God's Word alone, without recourse to any other means of any kind, I received within a short time an absolutely complete and permanent cure.

Let me add that I am in no sense criticising or belittling medical science. I am grateful for all the good that medical science accomplishes. Indeed, I myself was working with the medical services. But there is just this one thing to say: the power of medical science is limited; the power of God's Word is unlimited.

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Furthermore, there are many Christians of different denominational backgrounds who have a testimony similar to mine. I received a letter from a Presbyterian lady who was asked to give a word of testimony in a service in which there were a number of sick people to be prayed for. While this lady was testifying, and actually quoting the words of **Proverbs 4:20-22**, another lady in the seat next to hers, who had been suffering excruciating pain with a crushed disc in her neck, was instantly and completely healed and delivered - without any prayer being offered - simply through listening with faith to God's Word.

Later, I devoted a week on my radio Bible teaching programme to this theme of 'God's Medicine Bottle.' A lady listener suffering from chronic eczema decided to take the medicine according to the 'directions.' Three months later she wrote to tell me that, for the first time in 25 years, her skin was completely free from eczema.

The words of **Psalms 107:20**, are still being fulfilled today:

*He sent His word and healed them,  
And delivered them from their destructions.*

Christians who testify today of the healing power of God's Word can say as Christ Himself said to Nicodemus, in **John 3:11**:

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know  
and testify what We have seen..."*

We can also use, to those who need healing and deliverance, the gracious exhortation of **Psalms 34:8**:

*Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good;  
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*

Taste this medicine of God's Word for yourself! See how it works! It is not like so many earthly medicines, bitter and unpalatable. Nor does it work, like so many modern drugs, bringing relief to one organ of the body, but causing a reaction which impairs some other organ. No, God's Word is altogether good, altogether beneficial. When received according to God's direction, it brings life and health to our whole being.

### Mental Illumination

In the area of the mind, also, the effect of God's Word is unique. It is described in **Psalms 119:130**:

*The entrance of Your words gives light;  
It gives understanding to the simple.*

The Psalmist speaks of two effects produced in the mind by God's Word: 'light' and 'understanding.'

In the world today education is probably more highly prized and more universally sought after than at any previous period in man's history. Nevertheless, secular education is not the same as 'light' or 'understanding.' Nor is it any substitute for them. Indeed, there is no substitute

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for light. Nothing in the whole universe can do what light does, or take the place of light.

So it is with God's Word in the human mind. Nothing else can do in the human mind what God's Word does, and nothing else can take the place of God's Word.

Secular education is a good thing, but it can be misused. A highly-educated mind is a fine instrument - just like a sharp knife. But a knife can be misused. One man can take a sharp knife and use it to cut up food for his family. Another man may take an exactly similar knife and use it to kill a fellow human being.

So it is with secular education. It is a wonderful thing, but it can be misused. Divorced from the illumination of God's Word, it can become extremely dangerous. A nation or a civilization which concentrates on secular education, but gives no place for God's Word, is simply forging instruments for its own destruction. The history of recent developments in the technique of nuclear fission is one among many historical examples of this fact.

On the other hand, God's Word reveals to man those things which he can never discover by his own unaided intellect: the reality of God the Creator and Redeemer; the true purpose of existence; man's own inner nature; his origin and his destiny. In the light of this revelation, life takes on an entirely new meaning. With a mind thus illuminated, a man sees himself as part of a single comprehensive plan that spans the universe. Finding his place in this divine plan, he achieves a sense of self-worth and personal fulfilment that satisfies his deepest longings.

The effect of God's Word upon the mind, no less than its effect upon the body, has been made real for me in personal experience. I was privileged to receive the highest form of education that Britain had to offer in my generation. This climaxed with seven years at Cambridge University, studying philosophy, both ancient and modern. Always I was seeking something that would give real meaning and purpose to life. Academically I was successful, but inwardly I was still frustrated and unfulfilled.

Finally, as a last resort, I started to study the Bible simply as a work of philosophy, sceptically, as one who had rejected all forms of religion. Yet before many months, and before I had even reached the New Testament in my studies, the entrance of God's Word had imparted to me the light of salvation; the assurance of sins forgiven; the consciousness of inward peace and eternal life. I had found what I had been seeking: the real meaning and purpose of life.

It is appropriate to close this study by returning to **Hebrews 4:12**:

*For the word of God is living and powerful (or energetic), and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of*

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*joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

It will be seen that this confirms and sums up the conclusions which we have reached concerning God's Word. There is no area of the total human personality to which God's Word does not penetrate. It reaches right down into the spirit and soul, the heart and the mind, and even into the innermost core of our physical body, the joints and the marrow.

In perfect accord with this, we have seen in this and in our previous study that God's Word, implanted as a seed in the heart, brings forth eternal life; thereafter it provides spiritual nourishment for the new life thus brought forth; received into our bodies it produces perfect health; and received into our minds it produces mental illumination and understanding.

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**Power of The Blood**  
**From From Shadow to Substance by Roy Hession**

*But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*

*For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

*Hebrews 9:11-14*

SO MUCH IS said in the Epistle to the Hebrews of the blood of Jesus and we ourselves have reiterated this term so often in these pages, that it would be well to pause and inquire as to its real meaning and how it is that it accomplishes so much for us, lest it be considered just a cliché used only by a minority of Christians. We should be aware that to many people, even to believers, constant use of the term is offensive and they would much prefer to speak about the death of Christ or the cross of Christ. Fair enough, it could be regarded as a meaningless cliché if we never explained the special significance that Scriptures attaches to the expression. The fact is that "the death of Christ," "the cross of Christ," and "the blood of Christ" are not interchangeable terms, and if God in certain contexts speaks about the blood of His Son, it is because that phrase expresses certain aspects of truth the others do not. Each has its special meaning and emphasis.

### The Ashes Of a Heifer

Now we are in a position to consider the blood of Christ as typified by this strange figure, the ashes of a heifer. The reference is to an ordinance set out in Numbers 19, where the ashes of a heifer mingled with water were sprinkled upon the ceremonially defiled one, in order to restore him to his privileges of worship in Israel. Under the law of Moses, anyone who had had contact with death was regarded as ceremonially unclean and excluded from certain privileges of worship until he was cleansed. To have touched a dead body, even a bone, or to have tended a man who died was enough to render a person defiled. And inasmuch as in the forty years in the wilderness a whole generation was dying out, all of whom had to be buried, people were all the time being defiled by death and

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excluded from their privileges. It was necessary, therefore, that there should be a mode of cleansing which was as continuously available as the defilement was continuously contracted. The high priest was ordered, therefore, to slay a red heifer, sprinkle its blood in the tabernacle, and burn its body outside the camp, reducing it to ashes, which ashes were then carefully preserved, barrels of them. Whenever a man knew he had been defiled, he would go to another who was "clean" and ask him to perform the cleansing ceremony upon him. That man would take a little bit of those ashes, mingle them with running water, and sprinkle them upon the unclean. He would do it again the seventh day, and after that the man was clean and could return to his religious privileges.

There is much more deeply significant detail in this ceremony which we need not go into here. My purpose is to fix your attention on the words "the ashes of an heifer," for they are, as I say, an illustration of what is meant by the blood of Jesus Christ. You cannot burn ashes, they are burned already. Ashes are what is left when the fire has done its work and are a memorial to that work. At Calvary the fire of the anger of God against human sin fell on the Son of God. One of the Psalms asks the question, "Who knoweth the power of thine anger?" (90:11). The only One who has known the full power of the anger of God against sin was Jesus Christ as He hung on the cross; and He not only knew it, He exhausted it. In Him the fire burnt itself out. That is something of what He meant when He uttered the words "It is finished." It was only after those words that the Roman soldier came and pierced His side and immediately blood and water came out. The blood of Jesus is a memorial to a fire that has finished its work and gone out. In other words, it is a token of His finished work, of judgment which has been exhausted by Him on our behalf. As we look at the blood of Jesus, all we see of that judgment are but the ashes of it. To that work the sinner need not add anything to put himself right with God; everything has been done for him. And the sprinkling of the ashes on the unclean betokens the application of the finished work of Christ.

The burnt ashes and the shed blood, then, speak of the same thing, of a judgment that is finished. The blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doorposts on the Passover night uttered the same message. God had said that in the midst of the judgment which was coming on every house, "the blood shall be to you for a token." A token of what? A token that judgment had already come to the house on which it was sprinkled. It had come to the house when, as the sun was setting that evening, father and son slew the lamb and sprinkled the blood on the doorpost. The father had said to his son who, I imagine, hated to kill the little creature, "Either this lamb dies or you do." So it was that the judgment that otherwise would have fallen on the son fell on the lamb and the sprinkled blood on

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the doorpost was a token of that fact. Therefore solid peace was theirs, for judgment could not again visit that house.

Now this is something of which the blood of Jesus speaks in a way that the Cross of Jesus does not. The Cross speaks of something else - His unspeakable humiliations and His willingness to undergo them all for us. As we stand beneath the Cross, we see that our sins brought Him there, and that humbles us to repentance. But the blood symbolizes His words "It is finished," and it speaks only of the victory that has been won for us there. The hymns about the Cross, the Good Friday ones, are rightly solemn as they recall the brokenness of the Deity. But by a divine instinct the writers of hymns about the blood of Jesus invariably make them triumphant, joyful, and even rhythmic - some would think irreverently so! But that is altogether fitting - when the saints see the blood again and their liberty in that blood, you just cannot stop them rejoicing with loud praises and shining eyes and sometimes (don't be shocked!) with clapping hands; for the blood speaks of a victory that has been won for them, a judgment that has been spent.

Oh, may the least omission pain  
My will-instructed soul,  
And drive me to the blood again  
That makes the wounded whole.

*By His stripes we are healed. 1 Peter 2:24*

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**Dake's Word Study on Isaiah 53:3-5**

- 3) He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.
- 4) Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
- 5) But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.

**Grief: Defined (53:3)**

Heb. choliy, malady. Trans. grief (v 3); griefs (v 4); disease (2 Ki. 1:2; 8:28-29; 2 Chr. 16:12; 21:18; Job 30:18; Ps. 38:7; Eccl. 6:2); sick (1:5); sickness (38:9, 12; Dt. 7:15; 28:61; 1 Ki. 17:17; 2 Ki. 13:14; 2 Chr. 21:15, 19; Ps. 41:3; Eccl. 5:17); sicknesses (Dt. 28:59). The words grief and griefs in v 3-4 should have been trans. sickness as the Heb. word is trans. elsewhere and recognized by many versions as in point 3, below. Christ was not only acquainted with diseases and sicknesses in the sense of being able to discern and diagnose them, and by being familiar with them in others, but He actually bore them in His own body while hanging on the cross and becoming a substitute for others, as in note on 10 proofs, below

**Man of Sorrows (53:3)**

He was a man of sorrows; because He carried our sorrows (v 3-4). He personally had no sin, sickness, pain, or suffering on account of His own self and sins; but we have these in abundance, and since He came into the world to carry them for us He had to become identified with us in our sufferings by taking them upon Himself and bearing them unto death so that we might be free from them. Therefore, sorrow became a characteristic of His life during His sufferings in particular. He no doubt had sorrows from the time His sensitive, pure, sinless, and untainted life began to contact the sins, depravities, corruptions, sicknesses, diseases, and pains of others

**Messiah Stricken**

Heb. naga; to touch; lay the hand upon; strike violently; bring down; smite with a plague (v 4; Dt. 21:4). Trans. touch with various endings, 92 times

**Borne: Defined (53:4)**

Heb. nasa, to lift; bear; carry away; cast away; ease; erase; take away. The idea is that of one person taking the burden of another and placing it on himself, as carrying an infant; or, as the flood lifted up the ark (v 4; Ps. 103:12; Mt. 8:16-17; 1 Jn. 3:5). If Christ bore our griefs (sicknesses, the note above), then they were taken away in the same sense sins are taken away, or borne, as in v 11. This was not only done for people who lived during the few years of Christ's ministry on earth, but it was accomplished for all men of all ages. If sickness was borne only for these few, then sins were likewise borne only for these few, and others are lost, are subject to sickness, and have no remedy for either

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**10 Proofs Christ Bore Sin &  
Sickness**

1 It is so stated in v 4-5: Surely (Heb. aken, surely; firmly; certainly) He hath borne our griefs (sicknesses and diseases, as in the note above), and carried our sorrows... He was wounded (pierced, slain bodily) for our transgressions... bruised for our iniquities... with His stripes we are healed

2 The quotation and fulfillment of this prophecy in Mt. 8:16-17 prove that the bearing of sicknesses and infirmities was physical, not spiritual healing. Physical healing is mentioned hundreds of times in covenant, promise, prophecy, and experience in Scripture, whereas healing of the soul is mentioned only one time in Ps. 41:4. See Healing in Index

3 Many versions confirm this plain truth of v 3-5, 10 and state that both sin and sickness were borne by Christ in His sufferings, and that physical healing and forgiveness of sins were both provided for in the atonement of Christ. Berkeley: "acquainted with sickness... Surely He has borne our sickness... pierced for our transgressions... bruised for our iniquities... with His stripes we are healed;" Septuagint: "This man beareth away our sins... by His stripes we are healed;" Peshitta: "He was slain for our sins... with His wounds we are healed;" Moffatt: "A man of pain, who knew what sickness was... ours was the pain He bore... He was wounded because we had sinned, 'twas our misdeeds that crushed Him... the blows that fell to Him have brought us healing;" Fenton: "He was convicted because of our crimes, and punished because of our vices; and by His stripes we were healed... yet the Lord pleased to depress Him with pain;" Young: "A man of pains, and acquainted with sickness... Surely our sicknesses He hath borne, and our pains He hath carried them... by His bruise there is healing for us... He hath made Him sick;" Rotherham: "Man of pains, and familiar with sickness... Surely our sicknesses He carried, and as for our pains He bare the burden of them... He was pierced for transgressions that were ours, was crushed for iniquities that were ours... the chastisement of our well-being was upon Him. And by His stripes there is healing for us... He laid on Him sickness"

4 According to the Heb. as in versions quoted above, v 10 plainly says that He (Jehovah) hath made Him sick... depressed Him with pain... laid on Him sickness; this was in addition to His soul being made an offering for sin. He was made sick for men as He was made sin for them. The idea is that He became the sick offering as well as the sin offering for man. Naturally, He never committed personal sin, neither was guile found in His mouth (1 Pet. 2:21-22). He never committed robbery, adultery, blasphemy, or any other sin; and yet it is stated in 2 Cor. 5:21 that He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Likewise, He did not personally experience all the sicknesses and diseases, but He became sick in the sense of becoming an offering for sickness. He made atonement for sin and all its effects. Both sin and sickness were a part of the one curse, and both became a part of the one redemption. Christ atoned for and made provision for sickness to be healed, as well as for sin to be forgiven

5 God does nothing to remove sin, sickness, and every other part of the curse, apart from the redemptive work of Christ. Even the future restoration of the earth, the creatures on earth, and the whole human family, including their bodies, souls, and spirits, will be done through redemption (Rom. 8:18-25). How could redemption be apart from atonement, and how could it be complete without provision for the body as well as the soul? If the whole creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption it is bound to be by blood, and will include both body and soul

6 God has made covenants to heal the body as well as to save the soul (Ex. 15:26; 23:25; Lev. 26; Dt. 28; Mt. 26:28). Promises and prophecies were made also to this end; and God sent Jesus Christ to fulfil these and demonstrate the provisions for man by healing the body and saving the soul (Mt. 8:16-17; 9:5-6; Jn. 10:10; Acts 10:38). Christ sent the early disciples out to carry on such work (Mt. 10; 28:20; Mk. 16:15-20; Lk. 10; 24:49; Acts 1:1-2, 8; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; Heb. 2:3-4)

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### 10 Proofs Christ Bore Sin & Sickness (Continued)

7 God has declared that healing will accompany conversion if the gospel is taught properly and men receive and act on the truth (6:9-13; Job 33:14-29; Ps. 103:3; Mt. 9:5-6; 13:14-17; Acts 28:24-28; Jas. 5:14-16)

8 Peter confirmed the doctrine of Isaiah in stating that Christ bore the sins of all men in His body on the cross, and that by His stripes we are healed (1 Pet. 2:24). See Healing in Index

9 In typology, atonement is associated with healing in many scriptures. Whole chapters are devoted to making atonement for sins and sicknesses and even for the minutest touch of uncleanness, that of merely touching dead bodies, graves, issue of blood in childbirth, leprosy, etc. (Lev. 12:7-8; 14:1-57; 15:1-33). Why all these detailed instructions in connection with atonement for cleansing from sin and sickness in typology if there is no connection between atonement and healing of disease in Christ who fulfilled the types?

10 In many cases of healing recorded in both testaments, prayer and atonement were fully recognized as God's method of dealing with sin and sickness. Note the necessity of atonement and proper confession of sin in the various healings (Ex. 32; Num. 11:1-3; 12:1-16; 16:46-50; 21:1-9 with Jn. 3:14; 2 Sam. 24; Mt. 8:1-4, 16-17). Many died of sickness in Corinth because they did not recognize and appropriate healing through the broken body and shed blood of Christ (1 Cor. 11:27-34). Christ, Himself recognized atonement in connection with healing (Mt. 8:1-4)

### Messiah's Healing Power (53:5)

Heb. rapha, to mend; cure; heal; repair; make whole (v 5; 6:10). It has no reference to spiritual healing whatsoever. There are at least 14 Heb. and Gr. words found in scores of passages which plainly teach bodily soundness, healing, health, preservation, salvation, and deliverance. Sometimes one of these words is used in the same passage of both body and soul, and thus proves that it is not limited to the spiritual part of man. See p. 632; Bible plagues, p. 317 of N.T.

### Carried: Defined (53:4)

Heb. cabal, to carry; bear. Trans. carried (v 4); bear (v 11; Gen. 49:15; 2 Chr. 2:2); and burden (Eccl. 12:5). The idea in all these passages is that the full load is borne by the one carrying it so that all others might be free of it. The meaning is that Christ bore all our sicknesses and pains, so that we do not need to have them; and if we do have them it is because we have not unloaded them on Him, by faith. There is no need for us to bear them if He bore them. If God had not intended for His people to be free from such then He would not have laid them upon Christ to bear for us (v 3-4, 6, 8, 11). One can be rid of his sicknesses as well as his sins upon the same basis of prayer and faith in the atonement. We must believe in the provision to experience the benefits. All the promises of Scripture and all benefits of the gospel are for believers, not unbelievers. The law of God is: he that believeth will be blessed, and he that believeth not will not be blessed (Mk. 1:15; 16:15-20; Jn. 7:27-39; 14:12-15; Heb. 11:6; Jas. 1:5-8). In all things the rule is: According to your faith so be it unto you (Mt. 8:13; 9:29)

### Messiah's Reception (53:4)

The idea here is that those who rejected the Messiah sinned the greatest by condemning Him to death, turning their faces from the very sufferings they caused, and supposing that He was suffering on account of His own sins and crimes, and that God was meting out proper justice to Him in striking, smiting, and afflicting Him (v 4). In this they erred, for it was not His own sins, sicknesses, pains, and sorrows that He bore, but ours. It was not for His own crimes that God suffered Him to be stricken, smitten, and afflicted, but for those of all others. Being so judged of God did not prove that He was a sinner and deserved what He suffered, but that we were the greatest of sinners and deserved punishment. It only demonstrated the love of God when He freely gave Christ to be a substitute for such sufferings; and it further proved love on Christ's part when He showed Himself willing to become such a substitute. We deserved what He suffered, but He was the one who bore such penalties for sin

## Discipleship

## Notes:

### 14 Hebrew & Greek Words that Refer to Bodily Healing

1 The Heb. rapha is trans. cure (Jer. 33:6); make whole (Job 5:18); heal (19:22; 57:18-19; Num. 12:13; Dt. 32:39; 2 Ki. 20:5, 8; 6:2; Jer. 17:14; 30:17; Hos. 6:1; Zech. 1:16); healed (6:10; 53:4; Gen. 20:17; Ex. 21:19; Lev. 13:18, 37; 14:3, 49; Dt. 28:27, 35; 1 Sam. 6:3; 8:29; 9:15; 2 Chr. 22:6, 30:20; Ps. 30:2; 107:20; Jer. 17:14; Ezek. 34:4; Hos. 7:1; 11:3); healeth (20:26; Ex. 15:26; Ps. 103:3; 147:3); thoroughly healed (Ex. 21:19); and physician (Gen. 50:2; 2 Chr. 16:12; Job 13:4; Jer. 8:22)

2 The Heb. marpay is trans. healing (Jer. 14:19; Mal. 4:2); health (Pr. 4:22; 12:18; 13:17; 16:24; Jer. 8:15); cure (Jer. 33:6); remedy (2 Chr. 26:16; Pr. 6:15; 29:1); sound in health (Pr. 14:30); and wholesome (Pr. 15:4)

3 The Heb. yeshuwah is trans. health (Ps. 42:11; 43:5; 67:2); deliverance (Ps. 18:50; 44:4); and salvation (Ps. 91:16). The entire 91st Psalm teaches perfect healing and health physically; so the salvation of v 16 includes the body as well as the soul

4 The Heb. arubah means restoration to sound health (58:8; Jer. 8:22; 30:17; 33:6)

5 The Heb. chabash means healer (3:6); and to bind up or heal (30:26; 61:1; Ezek. 34:16; Hos. 6:1; Job 5:18; Ps. 147:3)

6 The Heb. rifooth means health (Pr. 3:8)

7 The Gr. therapeuo is trans. heal (Mt. 8:7; 10:1, 8; 12:10; Mk. 3:2, 15; Lk. 4:23; 6:7; 10:9; 14:3); healed (Mt. 4:23-24; 8:16, 17; 9:35; 12:15, 22; 14:14; 15:20; 19:2; 21:14; Mk. 1:34; 3:10; 6:5, 13; Lk. 4:40; 5:15; 6:18; 8:43; 9:6-11; 13:14; 14:4; Acts 4:14; 5:16; 8:7; 28:9); cure (Mt. 17:16; Lk. 9:1); and cured (Lk. 7:21; Jn. 5:10)

8 The Gr. iama means healing or repairing (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30)

9 The Gr. iaomai is trans. heal (Mt. 13:15; Lk. 4:18; 5:17; 9:2; Jn. 4:47; 12:40); healed (Mt. 8:8, 13; Mk. 5:29; Lk. 6:17, 19; 7:7; 8:2, 47; 17:15; 22:51; Jn. 5:13; Acts 3:11; 28:8; Heb. 12:13; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:24); healing (Acts 10:38); whole (Mt. 15:28; Acts 9:24)

10 The Gr. iasis means healing and cure (Lk. 13:32; Acts 4:22, 30; 28:27)

11 The Gr. bugiano means sound health (3 Jn. 2)

12 The Gr. hugies means healthy, sound and whole (Mt. 12:13; 15:31; Mk. 3:5; 5:34; Lk. 5:31)

13 The Gr. sodzo means to save, deliver, protect, heal, preserve, and make whole. It is used 86 times in reference to saving the soul, but in the following passages it refers to saving the body and healing it of sickness: Mt. 9:21-22; Mk. 5:29, 34; 6:56; 10:52; Lk. 8:36, 48; 8:50; 17:19; Acts 4:9; 14:9

14 The Gr. dia-sodzo means to save and to heal thoroughly, make perfectly whole, and is used of the body being healed (Mt. 14:35; Lk. 7:3)

### 2 Bodily References in Making Atonement

1 Wound. Heb. chala to wound; bore; slay; pierce (v 5; 51:9; Ps. 109:22). This refers to piercing the hands, feet, and side

2 Bruise. Heb. daka, to crumble; beat to pieces; break; bruise; crush; destroy; smite (v 5, 10; 3:15; Job 19:2; Ps. 72:4; 94:5). This refers to the stripes by scourging, cuts by thorns, and other bodily sufferings; and proves this was part of the work of atonement by which blood was shed. It was by this particular phase of punishment that bodily healing was provided for all alike (v 5; 1 Pet. 2:24)

DiscipleshipNotes:

## Great Doctrines of The Bible

### William Evans

Faith is the consent of the will to the assent of the understanding. Faith always has in it the idea of action - movement towards its object. It is the soul leaping forth to embrace and appropriate the Christ in whom it believes. It first says: "My Lord and my God," and then falls down and worships.

A distinction between believing about Christ and on Christ is made in John 8:30-31, "Many believed on Him . . . Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed Him" (RV).

### The Meaning of Faith in Particular

#### A. When Used in Connection with The Name of God

Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him; or he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Also Acts 27:22-25; Romans 4:19-21 with Genesis 15:4-6. There can be no dealings with the invisible God unless there is absolute faith in His existence. We must believe in His reality, even though He is unseen. But we must believe even more than the fact of His existence; namely, that He is a rewarder, that He will assuredly honor with definite blessing those who approach unto Him in prayer. Importunity will, of course, be needed (Luke 11:5-10).

There must be confidence in the Word of God also. Faith believes all that God says as being absolutely true, even though circumstances seem to be against its fulfillment.

#### B. When Used in Connection with The Person and Work of Christ

Recall the three elements in faith, and apply them here.

First, there must be a knowledge of the claims of Christ as to His person and mission in the world: As to His person - that He is Deity, John 9:35-38; 10:30; Philippians 2:6-11. As to His work - Matthew 20:28; 26:26-28; Luke 24:27, 44.

Second, there must be an assent to all these claims, John 16:30; 20:28; Matthew 16:16; John 6:68-69.

Third, there must be a personal appropriation of Christ as being all that He claims to be, John 1:12; 8:21, 24; 5:24. There must be surrender to a

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Person, and not mere faith in a creed. Faith in a doctrine must lead to faith in a Person, and that Person Jesus Christ, if salvation is to be the result of such belief. So Martha was led to substitute faith in a doctrine for faith in a Person (John 11:25).

It is such faith - consisting of knowledge, assent, and appropriation - that saves. This is believing with the heart (Romans 10:9-10).

**C. When Used in Connection with Prayer**

Three passages may be used to set forth this relationship: I John 5:14-14; James 1:5-7; Mark 11:24. There must be no hesitation which balances between belief and unbelief, and inclines toward the latter - tossed one moment upon the shore of faith and hope, the next tossed back again into the abyss of unbelief. To "doubt" means to reason whether or not the thing concerning which you are making request can be done (Acts 10:20; Romans 4:20). Such a man only conjectures; he does not really believe. Real faith thanks God for the thing asked for, if that thing is in accord with the will of God, even before it receives it (Mark 11:24). Note the slight: "that man."

We must recognize the fact that knowledge, assent, and appropriation exist here also. We must understand the promises on which we base our prayer; we must believe that they are worth their full face value; and then step out upon them, thereby giving substance to that which, at the moment may be unseen, and, perchance, non-existent, so far as our knowledge and vision are concerned, but which to faith is a splendid reality.

**D. When Used in Connection with The Word and Promise of God**

First, we should know whether the particular promise in question is intended for us in particular. There is a difference in a promise being written for us and to us. There are dispensational aspects to many of the promises in the Bible, therefore we must rightly divide, apportion, and appropriate the Word of God (cf I Corinthians 10:32).

Second, when once we are persuaded that a promise is for us, we must believe that God means all He says in that promise; we must assent to all its truth; we must not diminish nor discount it. God will not, cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Third, we must appropriate and act upon the promises. Herein lies the difference between belief and faith. Belief is mental, faith adds the volitional; we may have belief without the will, but not faith. Belief is a realm of thought; faith is a sphere of action. Belief lives in the study; faith comes out into the market-places and the streets. Faith substantiates

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belief - gives substance, life, reality, activity to it (Hebrews 11:1). Faith puts belief into active service, and connects possibilities with actualities. Faith is acting upon what you believe; it is appropriation. Faith counts every promise valid, and gilt-edged (Hebrews 11:11); no trial can shake it (Hebrews 11:35); it is so absolute that it survives the loss of anything (Hebrews 11:17). For illustration, see I Kings 18:41-43.

### **The Relation of Faith to Works**

There is no merit in faith alone. It is not mere faith that saves, but faith in Christ. Faith in any other savior but Christ will not save. Faith in any other gospel than that of the New Testament will not save (Galatians 1:8-9).

There is no contradiction between Paul and James touching the matter of faith and works (cf James 2:14-26; Romans 4:1-12). Paul is looking at the matter from the Godward side, asserts that we are justified, in the sight of God, meritoriously, without absolutely any works on our part. James considers the matter from the manward side, and asserts that we are justified, in the sight of man, evidentially, by works, and not by faith alone (2:24). In James it is not the ground of justification as in Paul, but the demonstration.

### **The Source of Faith**

There are two sides to this phrase of the subject - a divine and a human side.

#### **A. It Is the Work of the Triune God**

God the Father: Romans 12:3; I Corinthians 12. This is true of faith both in its beginning (Philippians 1:29) and its development (I Corinthians 12). Faith, then, is a gift of His grace.

God the Son: Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." (Illustration, Matthew 14:30-31 - Peter taking his eyes off Christ.) I Corinthians 12; Luke 17:5.

God the Spirit: Galatians 5:22; I Corinthians 12:9. The Holy Spirit is the executive of the Godhead.

Why then, if faith is the work of the Godhead, are we responsible for not having it? God wills to work faith in all His creatures, and will do so if they do not resist His Holy Spirit. We are responsible, therefore, not so much

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for the lack of faith, but for resisting the Spirit who will create faith in our hearts if we will permit Him to do so.

**B. There is Also a Human Side to Faith**

Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Acts 4:4, "How be it many of them which heard the word believed." In this instance the spoken word, the Gospel, is referred to; in other cases the written Word, the Scriptures, is referred to as being instrumental in producing faith. See also Galatians 3:2-5. It was a looking unto the promises of God that brought such faith into the heart of Abraham (Romans 4:19).

Prayer also is an instrument in the development of faith. Luke is called the human Gospel because it makes so much of prayer, especially in connection with faith: Luke 22:32, "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Luke 17:5, "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith." See also Mark 9:24; Matthew 17:19-21.

Our faith grows by the use of the faith we already have. Luke 17:5-6; Matthew 25:29.

**Some Results of Faith****A. We Are Saved By Faith**

We, of course, recall that the saving power of faith resides not itself, but in the Almighty Savior on whom it rests; so that, properly speaking, it is not so much faith, as it is faith in Christ that saves.

The whole of our salvation - past, present, and future, is dependent upon faith. Our acceptance of Christ (John 1:12); our justification (Romans 5:1); our adoption (Galatians 3:26); our sanctification (Acts 26:18); our keeping (I Peter 1:5), indeed our whole salvation from start to finish is dependent upon faith.

**B. Rest, Peace, Assurance, Joy**

Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 4:6; Romans 5:1; Hebrews 4:1-3; John 14:1; I Peter 1:8. Fact, faith, feeling - this is God's order. Satan would reverse this order and put feeling before faith, and thus confuse the child of God. We should march in accord with God's order. Fact leads, Faith with its eye on Fact, following, and Feeling with the eye on Faith bringing up the rear. All goes well as long as this order is observed. But the moment Faith turns his back on Fact, and looks at Feeling, the procession wobbles. Steam is of main importance, not for sounding the whistle, but for moving the wheels, and if there is a lack of steam we shall not remedy

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it by attempting by our own effort to move the piston or blow the whistle, but by more water in the boiler, and more fire under it. Feed Faith with Facts, not with Feeling. A. T. Pierson.

**C. Do Exploits Through Faith**

Hebrews 11:23-34; Matthew 21:21; John 14:12. Note the wonderful things done by the men of faith as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Read verses 32-40. Jesus attributes a kind of omnipotence to faith. The disciple, by faith, will be able to do greater things than his Master. Here is a mighty Niagara of power for the believer. The great question for the Christian to answer is not "What can I do?" but "How much can I believe?" for "all things are possible to him that believeth."

DiscipleshipNotes:**Three Kinds of Faith****John 11:1-46**

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister Martha. And it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. The sisters therefore sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." But when Jesus heard it, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it." Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When therefore He heard that he was sick, He stayed then two days longer in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You; and are You going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awaken him out of sleep." The disciples therefore said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." Now Jesus had spoken of his death; but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. Then Jesus therefore said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him." Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off; and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother. Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him; but Mary still sat in the house. Martha therefore said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." Jesus said to her, "Your brother shall rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ the Son of God, even He who comes into the world." And

DiscipleshipNotes:

when she had said this, she went away, and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here, and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she arose quickly, and was coming to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. The Jews then who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit, and was troubled, and said. "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. And so the Jews were saying, "Behold how He loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him who was blind, have kept this man also from dying?" Jesus therefore again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench; for he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you, if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" And so they removed the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast hearest Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people standing around I said it, that they may believe that Thou didst send Me." And when He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth." He who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings; and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done.

In this chapter, we see the faith of Martha in connection with the resurrection of her brother Lazarus. Now Lazarus fell ill, and Martha and her sister Mary sent for Jesus to come and heal him. Jesus delayed His coming until Lazarus was dead and in the tomb for four days. Then He came to raise him from the dead, and found the limited, fundamental faith of Martha, His only obstacle.

DiscipleshipNotes:

1. Martha's faith was limited. She said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. The death of Lazarus meant the end of Martha's faith. She believed that Jesus had the power to raise her brother even from the sick bed, but not from the dead. Her limited faith restricted the power of Christ (Matthew 13:53-59).

**Jesus Revisits Nazareth: Matthew 13:53-58**

*And it came about when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there and coming to His home town He began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became astonished, and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom, and these miraculous power? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his home town, and his own household," and He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.*

Limited faith is controlled by circumstances and motivated by fear of failure. (Numbers 11:2, 18-19, 21, 25, 27-31, 33).

2. Martha's faith was fundamental. Jesus said, "Your brother shall rise again." Martha said, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Martha declared her fundamental faith in a great truth; but that is not enough. Jesus stated, "I am the resurrection and life." Then He said, "Do you believe this?" Martha evaded the question by stating her fundamental faith in her creed, it is not enough to believe a creed only; faith must go beyond your creed, to the living, all powerful Christ. Her faith limited the power of Christ (Mark 10:27).

*"With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."*

And "Jesus wept." Jesus wept when He came to raise Lazarus from the dead and found limited fundamental faith only.

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Notes:

3. At last unlimited faith came to Martha when she consented to have the stone moved from the grave. When Jesus first ordered the stone taken from the grave, Martha objected in unbelief. Then Jesus, challenging her to believe, said, "Did I not say to you, if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" Martha believed and waited to see the glory of God, and she was not disappointed.

We often hear that "seeing is believing," but this is not so. You believe and then see. Faith comes before sight.

Now Martha's faith no longer limited the power of Christ. She consented to have the stone moved from the tomb and Jesus "cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth.'" And Lazarus was raised up. Don't be satisfied with limited fundamental faith only, when you have unlimited faith that pleases God and reveals His glory.

## SUGGESTED READING

## **Obedience and Knowledge**

**Andrew Murray**

*But (Jesus) said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11:28).*

I once received a letter from an evidently earnest Christian, asking me for some hints to help him in Bible study. My first thought was that there are so many addresses and booklets on the subject that he would find all I could say better said already. However, certain experiences in my own immediate circle soon showed me the need for instruction on this all-important subject; I found there were points to which special emphasis should be given. I pray and hope that what I now write may be from God, the fountain of light and life, to help His young children draw from His precious Word all that divine instruction and nourishment, all that abundant joy and strength which He has laid up for them.

Here I address a young Christian who has said to me, "Help me to study my Bible. Give me some rules for how to begin, and how to go on, so that I may know my Bible well."

The thing that comes before all else is this: In your Bible study everything will depend upon the spirit in which you approach it - the objective you propose. In worldly things a man is ruled and urged on by the goal he sets before himself. It is no different with the Bible. If your aim be simply to know the Bible well, you will be disappointed. If you think that a thorough knowledge of the Bible will necessarily be a blessing, you are mistaken. To some it is a curse. To others it is powerless, not making them either holy or happy. To some it is a burden, depressing them instead of quickening or lifting them up.

What ought to be the real objective of the Bible student? God's Word is food, bread from heaven; the first need for Bible study is a great hunger after righteousness, a great desire to do all God's will. The Bible is a light; the first condition to its enjoyment is a hearty longing to walk in God's ways. Is not this what the texts I began with teach us? "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." The Word is nothing if it is not obeyed. "If any man will do his will, he shall know." All true knowledge of God's Word depends upon there being first the will to obey it. This is the very lesson we are enforcing. God will unlock the real meaning and blessing of His Word only to those whose will is definitely set upon obeying it. I must read my Bible with one purpose: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

**This is easily understood when we think of what words are meant for. They stand between the will and the deed. A man wills to do something for you;**

**before he does it, he expresses his thought or purpose in words; then he fulfills the words by doing what he has promised.** So also with God. His words derive their value from what He does. In creation His Word was with power; He spoke and it was done. In grace He does what He says. David prays (II Samuel 7:25), "Do as thou has said." Solomon says at the consecration of the temple: "Who hath with his hand fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth"; "(who) hath performed his word that he hath spoken"; "which has kept . . . that which thou hast promised . . . and spake it with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled with thine hand"; "let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken" (II Chronicles 6:4, 10, 15, 17). Through the prophets, God says, "I the Lord have spoken it; I will do it." And they reply, "What thou hast spoken, is done." The truth and worth of God's promises consist in the fact that He fulfills them. **His words of promise are meant to be fulfilled.**

**This is no less true of His commands, which He intends us to obey. If we do not obey them, if we seek to know them, and admire their beauty and praise their wisdom, but to not obey them, we delude ourselves. They are meant to be obeyed; as we obey them their real meaning and blessing can be revealed to us. Only as we obey can we really grow in the divine life. "Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work (this first, then), and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10). Only when we approach God's words with the same object which God had in view - that they should be obeyed - can we have any hope of blessing.**

We see this all around us in the pursuit of knowledge, or in any branch of trade. The apprentice or pupil is expected to put the lessons he receives into practice; only then is he prepared for further teaching. Even so in the Christian life, Bible study is mere theory, a pleasing exercise of mind and imagination, worth little or nothing for true holiness or Christlikeness until the student is ready never to open or close his Bible without making God's purpose His very own. He listens when God says, "Do all that I speak."

This was the mark of the saints of old. "Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he" is the description of a man who, as a servant, was faithful in all his house. Of David we read, "I have found . . . a man after Mine own heart, who shall fulfill all My will." In Psalm 119 we hear him speak with God about His Word, and pray for divine light and teaching, but always including the vow of obedience, or some other expression of love and delight. Obeying God's will, even for God's own Son, is the one secret of entrance into the favor and the mind of God.

I have just been reading Dwight L. Moody's book, *Pleasure and Profit in Bible Study*. I am certain many will use the suggestions it contains, thinking what has helped a man like Mr. Moody can help me, too. And yet they will be

disappointed - unless they bring to the Bible what Mr. Moody brought: an honest desire to do whatever he saw God wanted him to do. Young Christian, "I beseech you by the mercies of God," when you ask God to lead you into the treasures of His Word, into the palace where Christ dwells, "present yourself as a living sacrifice," ready to do whatever God shall speak. Do not consider this a matter of course. It is of deeper importance than you know. This attitude is more frequently absent from Bible study than you think. Seek with deep humility. The first need for enjoying your food is hunger. The first requirement for the Bible study is a simple, determined longing to find out what God wants you to do, and a dead-in-earnest resolve to do it. "If any man will do His will" - the Word of God will be opened up to him.

***Please, meditate on the truths printed in bold.***

## ***The Word of God***

### ***Thompson Chain Reference***

**A. Called:**

Book of Law  
Law of the Lord  
Scriptures  
Holy Scriptures  
Word of God  
Word  
Word of life  
Book

Nehemiah 8:3  
Psalm 1:2  
John 5:39  
Romans 1:2  
Hebrews 4:12  
James 1:21-23  
Philippians 2:16  
Revelation 22:19

**B. Descriptive of:**

Old Testament  
God's revealed plan  
God's completed revelation  
Christ's message  
Christian Gospel

Mark 7:13  
Romans 9:6  
Colossians 1:25-27  
Luke 5:1  
Acts 4:31

**C. Describes as:**

Pure  
Restraining  
Perfect  
Sure  
Truth  
Enduring  
Effectual  
Sanctifying  
Harmonious  
Inspired  
Living and active

Psalm 19:8  
Psalm 119:11  
Psalm 19:7  
Psalm 111:7-8  
Psalm 119:142, 151, 160  
Isaiah 40:8  
Isaiah 55:11  
Ephesians 5:26  
Acts 15:15  
II Peter 1:21  
Hebrews 4:12

**D. Compared to:**

Lamp  
Fire  
Hammer  
Seed  
Sword

Psalm 119:105  
Jeremiah 5:14  
Jeremiah 23:29  
Matthew 13:18-23  
Ephesians 6:17

**E. Agency of, to:**

Heal	Psalms 107:20
Make free	John 8:32
Illuminate	Psalms 119:130
Bear witness	John 20:31
Produce faith	Romans 10:17
Make wise	II Timothy 3:15-17
Exhort	II Timothy 4:2
Rejoice the heart	Jeremiah 15:16
Create the world	Hebrews 11:3
Regenerate	James 1:18
Destroy the world	II Peter 3:5-7

**F. Proper attitude toward, to:**

Stand in awe of	Psalms 119:161
Tremble at	Isaiah 66:2, 5
Speak faithfully	Jeremiah 23:28
Search	Acts 17:11
Speak boldly	Acts 4:29, 31
Preach	Acts 8:25
Receive	Acts 11:1
Glorify	Acts 13:48
Teach	Acts 18:11
Obey	I Peter 3:1
Handle accurately	II Timothy 2:15
Do	James 1:22-23
Suffer for	Revelation 1:9

**G. In the believer's life, as:**

Restraint	Psalms 119:9, 11
Guide	Psalms 119:133
Source of joy	Psalms 119:47, 97, 162
Standard of conduct	Titus 2:5
Source of new life	I Peter 1:23
Spiritual food	I Peter 2:2

**H. Prohibitions concerning, not to be:**

Preached in man's wisdom	I Corinthians 2:4, 13
Used deceitfully	II Corinthians 4:2
Altered	Revelation 22:18-19

# BIBLIOGRAPHY



## ***Bibliography & Study Tools***

### **Bible Translations:**

Amplified Bible  
Dake's Annotated Reference Bible  
King James Version  
Moffatt's Translation  
New American Standard Version  
New International Version  
New King James Version  
New Scofield Study Bible  
Spirit-Filled Life Bible  
Thompson Chain Reference  
Weymouth Translation

### **Commentaries & Word Studies:**

The Expositor's Bible Commentary by Gabelien  
The Bible Knowledge Commentary by Walvoord & Zuke  
Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary  
Adam Clark Commentary  
Matthew Henry Commentary  
Pulpit Commentary  
Vincent Word Studies

### **Books:**

Christ the Healer by F.F. Bosworth  
By His Stripes by Hugh Jetter  
Foundational Series by Derek Prince  
Cultivation of the Inner Life by Andrew Murray  
From Shadow to Substance by Roy Hession